In 2008-09, Auburn teachers, administrators, and technology committee identified three significant educational needs for students in second grade. Based on student achievement data and a teacher technology staff development survey, the following needs were identified:

- To increase student reading -- specifically fluency and vocabulary skills,
- To enhance and strengthen differentiated instruction to support **all** students, and
- To integrate technology and 21st Century Skills into reading instruction.

Because of the three overriding needs, the technology and school improvement committees created a proposal that integrates research-based reading instruction, differentiated instruction, and technology in an effort to improve reading skills in a 21st Century Learning environment. The project's technology will allow teachers to a) assess students' current and summative levels of knowledge and provide immediate feedback, b) use formative assessment data to form flexible groupings in a timely manner, and c) encourage students to accept responsibility for, and to track their own learning -- three key elements of differentiated instruction. Differentiated instruction will initially serve as the primary means to address the needs of all second grade learners -- High Ability Learners, regular education students and Title I and Special Education students. First and third grade learners will benefit from the proposal components during the project's second phase of implementation.

Project teachers will use iPods mobile labs to create and implement instructional lessons in the form of podcasts. Students will use the devices to first listen to fluent reading, then record themselves reading fluently, and finally recording progress. Teachers will also load vocabulary lessons on iPods so students will be able to access vocabulary material written at the student's instructional reading level. Additionally, teachers will use Clickers and Mobis to enhance instruction and to check for student understanding in real time. By doing so, student needs can be identified and corrected immediately. Teachers will no longer need to identify student need by grading student papers at the end of the school day and then providing corrective instruction at a later time.

Project educators will receive on-going staff development to ensure success of technology integration in reading instruction. Staff development will be delivered during:

- 1 full day trainings on using technology equipment as it relates to reading instruction,
- 2 full days to reflect on successes and challenges of using equipment and to learn how to integrate podcasting into reading instruction to support fluency and vocabulary instruction and practice, and
- Peer coaching sessions <u>throughout the school year</u>, which include ESU 4 staff developers working with teachers as individuals and small groups as challenges with reading instruction and technology are integrate.

In turn, project teachers will serve as peer educators and mentors with the 'train the trainer' method for other teachers in Grades 1 and 3 during 2nd phase of the proposal's implementation period. By working with first and third grade teachers, research-based reading instruction and 21st Century skills supported by technology will continue to be infused throughout the school. The "trainer" teachers will also present the project regionally and statewide during technology workshops.